

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

23, 1920, a congress of the Iranian Communists was called to Enzeli, at that time within Kuchik Khan's area. It was attended mainly by Communists of Iranian nationality from Turkestan, and it did a considerable amount of work in regard to the program and the organization of the party. In Gilan, where it was under the protection of the Red Army and where it co-operated with Kuchik Khan's regime, the party could act openly. In the remainder of Iran, however, it had to be conspiratorial.

Sultan-zadeh, Chief of the Near Eastern Section in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in Moscow and simultaneously representative of the Iranian Communist party in the Third International (Comintern), wrote the following about the party in *Pravda*, July 16, 1921:

The Communist party tries to rally around it the most advanced elements among the peasants and the workers, to organize them, to elevate them under the inspiration of the Third Communist International, and to create simultaneously trade unions in all cities and the unions of agrarian workers in the villages.

Praising the work done by the Enzeli Congress, he said:

Thanks to our efforts the Communist party of Persia counts now 4,500 members. . . . During the past year we had more members, but due to the provocations of a group of adventurers who pretended to be Communists, our party's work ceased in some regions. It was necessary also to suspend for some time the publication of the Central Committee's paper *The Communist*. These events have obliged us to become excessively cautious and to increase the secret of our organization. Despite this we have succeeded in creating trade unions of workers and artisans which count now around 4,000 members. The Iranian Communist party has a good

understanding of the almost feudal environment in which it has to work.

The Communist party has adopted in its *minimum program* as its aim the overthrow of the authority of the Shah and of big landowners as well as the liberation of Persia from the economic and political oppression exercised by the English bandits, while trying to achieve a democratic regime in order to be able to augment the Communist propaganda.¹⁸

In February, 1921, at the time when the Soviet government was

is Quoted from Bucrocq, *op. cit.*, pp. 145 *ft.*

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